

Broadband Commission
August 23, 6:00 p.m. by Zoom
Regular Meeting Minutes

Call to Order: Chairman John Morosani called the regular meeting to order at 6:08 p.m. with John Bongiorno, Burke Gibney, Erich Marriott, Stephen Simonin, Jeffrey Zullo present.
Absent: Bruce Schnitzer, Stephan Krucker (Alt.)

Approval of Minutes: **Motion:** J. Bongiorno moved to approve the minutes of the regular meeting on June 28, 2021, and S. Simonin seconded. All voted aye except E. Marriott who abstained and the motion carried.

Public Comment: None

Old Business:

A) Survey results presentation to BOS

J. Morosani reported he presented the survey results to the Board of Selectmen at their meeting on August 3.

B) BOS approval of Revised Mission Statement

At the Board of Selectmen meeting on August 17 the Selectmen approved the revised Broadband Commission mission statement discussed at our last meeting. The revised mission includes representing the Town of Litchfield in discussions with Optimum over Optimum's efforts to upgrade its existing hybrid fiber-coax network to a fiber-to-the-home network, and collaborating with neighboring towns in the discussions with Optimum. The Commission will report its progress to the Board of Selectmen periodically.

New Business:

A) Working with 7 other towns in dealing with Optimum

J. Morosani reported that the Northwest Hills Council of Governments (NHCOG or the COG) is allocating money to hire someone to act as a regional coordinator for this effort, working with the 8 towns who have Optimum providing broadband services to their residents. The COG sent out an RFP seeking applicants to serve as this regional coordinator and has selected Kitty Kiefer, a resident of Salisbury and a recent addition to Northwest ConneCT, to serve in this role.

S. Simonin discussed the Cable TV Advisory Committee which he serves on representing Litchfield. He explained this Committee already works with Optimum on behalf of the towns who have Optimum so he's not sure what will be gained by having this new regional coordinator representing the 8 towns in discussions with Optimum. He is concerned they may be duplicating the same efforts. Commission members discussed this issue. It was noted that the COG should coordinate with the Cable TV Advisory Committee to ensure they are on the same page and their work with Optimum is productive and not redundant. J. Morosani will contact Jocelyn Ayer at the COG to seek clarification on the best way forward.

B) Possible use of ARPA funds for broadband

The possibility of creating a municipal WiFi network in Litchfield was discussed. J. Bongiorno, S. Simonin, and J. Morosani volunteered to look into this further. J. Zullo suggested looking into a pilot demo for just the center of Litchfield as an evaluation of the feasibility of creating a broader municipal WiFi network in town.

Next Meeting: The next Commission meeting will be September 27, 2021 at 6:00 p.m.

Adjournment: **Motion:** J. Zullo moved to adjourn and E. Marriott seconded. All voted aye and the meeting was adjourned at 6:58 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by:

Burke Gibney
Recording Secretary